

21 3. (Amended) A method as claimed in claim 1 [or 2] wherein the digestion resistant region is provided by modified nucleotides or ribonucleotides.

a2 5. (Amended) A method as claimed in [any one of claims] claim 1 [to 4] wherein the first and second primers each comprise 30 to 60 bases.

Sub C2 7. (Amended) A method as claimed in [any one of claims] claim 1 [to 6] wherein the third primer is of a sequence corresponding to at least a portion of the sequence in the first primer on the 5' side of the digestion resistant region of that primer.

8. A method as claimed in [any one of claims] claim 1 [to 7] wherein the fourth primer is of a sequence corresponding to at least a portion of the sequence in the second primer on the 5' side of the digestion resistant region of that primer.

9. A method as claimed in [any one of claims] claim 1 [to 8] wherein the third and fourth primers comprise 12 to 30 bases.

10. A method as claimed in [any one of claims] claim 1 [to 9] wherein the 5' double strand specific exonuclease is T7 Gene 6 exonuclease.

11. A method as claimed in [any one of claims] claim 1 [to 10] wherein the strand displacing DNA polymerase is at least one of, 9°N polymerase, Klenow (exo⁻) polymerase, *Bst* polymerase, Vent (exo⁻) polymerase, or Deep Vent (exo⁻) polymerase, *Pfu* (exo⁻) polymerase, *Tth* polymerase, *Tfl* polymerase, *Taq* polymerase or *Bca* (exo⁻) polymerase.

12. A method as claimed in [any one of claims] claim 1 [to 11] wherein the steps of exonuclease digestion and strand displacing polymerisation are effectively separated by performing the two reactions separately by removal of enzyme between steps, or, under conditions which favour the action of one or other enzyme.

13. A method as claimed in [any one of claims] claim 1 [to 12] effected isothermally.

14. A method as claimed in [any one of claims] claim 1 [to 13] wherein the digestible regions of the first and second primers are of identical sequence and the third and fourth primers are identical to these sequences.

15. A method as claimed in [any one of claims] claim 1 [to 14] wherein the 5'-ends of the first, second, third and fourth primers have a partial degree of resistance to digestion.

16. A method as claimed in [any one of claims] claim 1 [to 15] wherein the amplification occurs in the presence of further primers specific to other target sequences (multiplex amplification) or to all or some of the same target sequence (nested amplification).

17. A method as claimed in [any one of claims] claim 1 [to 16] wherein at least a portion of at least one of the nucleoside triphosphates provided as (e) of claim 1 is/are a modified such that when it is incorporated in a growing nucleic acid chain it is resistant to digestion by the exonuclease.

18. A method as claimed in [any one of claims] claim 1 [to 7] wherein the nucleic acid is DNA.

In claim 20, line 19, at the end of paragraph (e) please delete the period.

Respectfully submitted,

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